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QUESTION OF THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES, INCLUDING PALESTINE

Letter dated 18 February 1993 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the Chairman of the Commission on Human Rights

I have the honour to bring to your attention a letter [dated 8 February 1993] addressed by the Ambassador of Israel to the United Nations in New York, His Excellency Mr. Gad Yaacobi, to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, His Excellency Dr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali.

Since my own appeal to the Director of the Centre for Human Rights Mr. Ibrahima Fall, concerning document E/CN.4/1993/70 has not led to any action, my country has deemed it necessary to bring this matter to the attention of the Secretary-General.

May I seize this opportunity to ask once again that you see to it that steps are taken to disassociate the Commission on Human Rights from the expression of anti-Semitism contained in the above-mentioned document. The offensive phrases used are in clear contradiction to the Commission's principles and ideals and should be firmly rejected.

I would also be grateful if this letter could be circulated as an official document of the Commission.

(Signed): Itzhak Lior
Ambassador

8 February 1993

Excellency,

I have the honour to bring to your attention a recent manifestation of anti-Semitism and religious intolerance in a letter from the PLO circulated as an official document of the United Nations.

In a letter dated 7 October 1992 sent to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the Under-Secretary-General for Human Rights (E/CN.4/1993/70), the observer for the PLO in Geneva wrote as follows:

> "It would appear that the Israeli occupation authorities, who are today celebrating the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur), are never fully happy even on religious occasions unless their celebrations, as usual, are marked by Palestinian blood and the immolation of innocent defenceless members of the Palestinian people."

The afore-mentioned statement by the observer for the PLO in Geneva is a slanderous and malicious attack on the Jewish religion and the Jewish people. It recalls the anti-Semitic blood libels and ritual murder charges of the Middle Ages, when Jews were falsely accused of celebrating religious holidays by using the blood of non-Jews for various purposes. Such accusations often served as a prelude to, or pretext for, attacks against Jews, and were designed to provoke fear and hatred of Jews among their non-Jewish neighbours. It is disturbing to see that medieval slurs such as the afore-mentioned statement continue to be used at the close of the twentieth century. Israel denounces in the strongest possible terms this loathsome form of bigotry and racism.

This incident demonstrates once again the true nature of the PLO.

I would be grateful, Excellency, if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 91.

(Signed): Gad Yaacobi
Ambassador